

Claims:

1. A karabiner comprising a generally C-shaped body, with its free ends curved towards each other and forming a gap therebetween, a gate for closing the gap, and at least one roller.
2. A karabiner as claimed in claim 1, wherein the at least one roller is positioned relative to the body of the karabiner, so as to reduce rope drag through the karabiner in normal climbing situations.
3. A karabiner as claimed in claim 1 having a single roller located at one end of the karabiner body, where the body bends to form one free end of the C-shape.
4. A karabiner as claimed in claim 3, wherein the roller at the end of the karabiner at which the free end of the gate locates.
5. A karabiner as claimed in claim 1 having a roller at each end of the karabiner body.
6. A karabiner as claimed in claim 1, wherein instead of a single roller at any end of the karabiner body, a pair of rollers may be provided side by side.
7. A karabiner as claimed in claim 6 having a pair of rollers at one end of the karabiner and a single roller at the opposite end.
8. A karabiner as claimed in claim 1, wherein a roller forms part of the body of the karabiner.
9. A karabiner as claimed in claim 8, wherein the roller forms part of a side of the karabiner body.

10. A karabiner as claimed in claim 8, wherein the roller is mounted within the body of the karabiner.
11. A karabiner as claimed in claim 10, wherein the roller is mounted within a recess formed in the body.
12. A karabiner as claimed in claim 1, wherein the roller has a concave profile to provide a running groove for a rope.
13. A karabiner as claimed in claim 12, wherein for karabiners where the roller is mounted within a recess of the body, the profile of the recess will correspond with the roller profile, so that there is a consistent gap between the roller and the body.
14. A karabiner as claimed in claim 1, wherein the at least one roller is mounted for free rotation on axles mounted between sides of the roller recesses.
15. A karabiner as claimed in claim 14, wherein the axle is deformable under high loads, so that the roller will contact the body of the karabiner to provide braking.
16. A karabiner as claimed in claim 1, wherein the rollers are single components.
17. A karabiner as claimed in claim 1, wherein the rollers are formed as split components.
18. A karabiner as claimed in claim 1 having a webbing sling or strap.
19. A karabiner as claimed in claim 18, wherein the body of the karabiner has a groove in at least one face thereof to provide a location for the webbing sling or strap.

20. A karabiner as claimed in claim 19, wherein the grooves are at the opposite end of the karabiner to the rollers.
21. A karabiner as claimed in claim 1 having a spring-loaded gate.
22. A karabiner as claimed in claim 1, having a solid gate.
23. A karabiner as claimed in claim 1 having a wire gate.
24. A karabiner as claimed in claim 1 having additional gate locking means.
25. A karabiner as claimed in claim 1 having a ring at one end of the body.